

ST4KIDS

*Intentional Evangelism utilizing stories from
God's Word resulting in multiplying house
churches*

Storying Training for “Kids”

Discipleship and evangelism training for oral learners

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ST4 KIDS

“Why are you surprised that your daughter is telling people about Jesus? She has the same Holy Spirit that you have.” As my friend said this to me I realized that I had assumed that although my children knew Jesus, I was underestimating what they could do for him simply because of their age. Through the years I have seen my children say things and talk to people in ways that I would be afraid to do simply because they don’t have the same inhibitions that come with age and experience. Jesus said, “Anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” Children believe. They trust. They state truth without worrying about what people think. And people listen. Neighbors, friends, and family members have listened to my children telling Bible stories simply because they didn’t want to interrupt a child. But they would have stopped me.

The habits we learn as young people grow with us. How many of us have said, “I just don’t know how to share my faith? I’m never sure what to say when”? What if we had learned an effective, Scripturally sound way to share our faith as children? What if this way of sharing could be used throughout our lives? Children love stories, and their memories are awesome! Stories told to children become a part of who they are. If they learn these stories as children, they can use them throughout their lives to share Jesus with people, and they develop a pattern of sharing that becomes naturally a part of who they are and what they talk about.

Who?

These story sets are meant to be used for and by children---8-13 year olds who already have a relationship with Jesus or who are seeking one. They may be volunteers going overseas on mission trips with their parents, local children who want to share with their friends, or ‘third culture kids’ (TCKs) who already live overseas. These children can learn these stories, share them with friends and family, and even lead other groups of children to learn them as well. Adults can use these stories with children for Bible camps, Vacation Bible Schools, or other programs. If adults use these stories, they should do so with the goal of helping the children learn and use these stories themselves with their friends and families.

What?

The story set’s redemptive theme is God as the ultimate promise keeper and friend. He is the ultimate promise keeper in that from the beginning of the world, he promised a way for us to be saved from the punishment for our sin. He is the ultimate friend in that he loves us so much that he wanted to save us and give us a full life here on Earth.

Three versions of the set are available for you to use depending on your context: 5, 10, and 15-story sets. The story set’s theme is most developed in the 15-story set, but the shorter sets are useful for activities such as Vacation Bible School, or when time with the children is limited.

ST4Kids follows the pattern of the original ST4T paradigm so that children may use this strategy in conjunction with their parents and other adults around them.

Why?

ST4Kids, like ST4T, is a strategy for training believers to share their faith, through the telling of both personal stories and Bible stories, and to train others to do the same. Although children may not be starting their own churches, as they tell stories and their family members become believers, the adults may start their own churches and groups based on the stories they have learned from their children. ST4Kids provides God's Word to oral communicators in ways that they can remember it, reproduce it and use it to lead others to Jesus. ST4Kids, like ST4T, incorporates intentionality, accountability and immediacy, meaning that from the very beginning those involved are doing it rather than just learning about it, and they are accountable for what they do or do not do.

The basic premise of ST4T and ST4Kids evangelism is to listen to another's story, share your story, then tell God's story. The first of God's stories told is one about how Jesus changed the life of a man living in torment ("Man with Evil Spirits") (or about the "Paralytic" who was healed and forgiven by Jesus, in the 5-story set) Jesus then told him to go home and share with others (including his family and friends) the story of how God changed his life. Next a brief Bible panorama is shared—God's story from creation to church. This is basically a Gospel presentation, with an invitation to accept Jesus given at the end. If the response is positive, the new believer is coached to begin immediately sharing his or her story, "Man with Evil Spirits," and "Creation to Church" with a specific list of people. He or she also is brought into a discipleship storying group, utilizing the ST4Kids core discipleship story set that you have developed. If the response to the Gospel presentation is negative, ask if the individual would be willing to set a time for him or her (along with friends and family) to listen to the individual stories of the ST4Kids core story set.

The basic core discipleship set provides the essential framework for short-term and long-term discipleship through Bible stories and story sets. Other story sets are being made available through www.st4t.org.

ST4Kids represents a win-win strategy, since it always strives to leave the door open for further conversation. ST4Kids combines two best practices—Bible storying, with its oral communication principles, and T4T, a proven evangelism, discipleship, and church-planting strategy.

In brief, Bible storying is the sharing of biblical truths through telling Bible stories. In the ST4Kids approach, we embrace a chronological approach to Bible storying. As these stories are presented, oral communication principles are kept in mind, such as utilizing narrative as communication, reproducibility, mnemonic devices, oral thought processes and decision-making, story development and crafting, etc.

In addition to processing each story fully through a specific set of discovery questions (listed on each curriculum page), those involved in ST4Kids are asked three specific questions after each and every story: 1) How are you going to remember this story? 2) Specifically, to whom are you going to tell this story? 3) What in this story is there to obey? Immediate obedience is key to the ST4Kids process.

How?

Leading an ST4KIDS session begins with preparation. Because you are teaching and encouraging the children to memorize the stories, you must be willing to do the same. Spend time in each Scripture passage and be sensitive to the Spirit's guidance as God lays truths on your heart.

The stories on the following pages are meant as foundations and guidelines for your storytelling. As you get to know the children, you may need to adjust accordingly. Although you do not need to tell the stories exactly as they are written here, consistency in the stories and terms is vital.

Once you have learned the story and the children have gathered, your first task is to **explain** storying to the participants. For the sessions to be successful, they need to understand why they are learning stories and how they can and should be using them to share the Good News with their friends.

Each subsequent session will follow a structured format. You will begin with asking the children to **share** about their experiences telling the previous story during the week. The sharing should be followed by a time for the children to **pray** for those that heard and for more opportunities to tell the stories.

The second portion of the session is to **review** the preceding story. Ask for a volunteer to retell the entire story without interruption. Be sure to encourage and thank the child for telling the story before asking the other participants to kindly **remind** the volunteer of anything he or she left out of the story. Your attitude should promote constructive remarks during this time.

After the children have reviewed the story, you should **tell** the new story at least two times. The first time through, instruct the children to listen with their ears to get the general idea of the story. The next time, they should use their minds to begin remembering.

The next step is to **involve** the children in a learning activity. One is suggested under the "teaching" section on each curriculum page, but you may adjust or conduct another activity better suited to the needs of your group. The appendix includes some other suggested activities.

Following the activity, the children should **discuss** the story using the questions listed beside each story. Several discussion points are included to provide direction if necessary. The children should then **retell** the story with the full group, smaller groups, or in pairs. Be sure to converse about portions that appear difficult to remember as they retell it.

The time should end with a **charge** to go out and share the story they have learned and a **prayer** for opportunities to do so.

Getting Started

The ideal way to present this ST4Kids story set is to begin with a “hook” story that gets the children interested in hearing more about Jesus. In the fifteen and ten story sets, you may use the “Man with Evil Spirits” story, and in the five story set, you may use the “Paralyzed Man” story as a hook story. We like the “Man with Evil Spirits” story because it immediately challenges the children to share what God has done for them. After the hook story, the teacher may choose to teach the appropriate C2C (Creation to Church) story. As the children learn the C2C story, be sure that they learn well the sections in bold print, as those sections contain the information needed to make an informed decision for Jesus.

The C2C story may be used as a Gospel presentation to lead a child to Jesus, and so it would be important for each child to learn the story so they may use it with their friends. After learning the C2C story, the teacher may begin with the “Creation” story and continue with each story in turn, including re-telling the “hook” story when it comes to its place in the story set.

This curriculum is designed for one story to be told and learned each session. The learning activities can be modified to fit into the time that you have for the session.

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The logo consists of the letters 'C2C' in a white, handwritten-style font, centered on a solid green rectangular background.

In the beginning, there was God. He spoke and created the whole world and everything in it. Then he made a special creation. He made man and woman and he patterned them after himself. He had a perfect relationship with them. He walked with them, talked with them, and took care of them, until one day, the man and woman disobeyed God, and broke their relationship with him. They were separated from God.

The man and the woman had children and their children had children, and their children had children. But the people were still separated from God. Even when the world was full of people, God never forgot about his special creation. **He still loved them and wanted to have a right relationship with them.** One day he spoke to a man named Abraham, and he told him, “I am going to give you a huge family. I am going to make a great people group out of them. They will be a people group just for me. **And I will bless the whole world through you and your family.**” And even though Abraham was a very old man with no children, **he believed God. God considered Abraham to have a right relationship with him because of his belief.**

God kept his promise to Abraham, and Abraham did have a son, and his son had sons, until God had made a huge people group from Abraham’s family, just as he said he would. Sometimes they followed God, but most of the time they were disobedient, just like the first man and woman. So, God would send spokesmen to the people to show them how they could have a good relationship with him.

One of these spokesmen was named Isaiah. Isaiah brought Abraham’s family a message of hope about a **Promised Savior.** Through Isaiah, God said, “The Savior that I will send will be beaten and whipped so you will be healed. **I will put your disobedience onto him, and he will be punished and killed, but then have life again. Because of this, many people will have a right relationship with me.**” From that time on, they waited for this Promised Savior...and they waited...and they waited...

And God did keep his promise. **He sent the Promised Savior, Jesus**, and he was God's very own Son. Jesus proved that he was the Promised Savior by performing many miracles and by healing people. He also set an example for the way we should live. Not everyone recognized who Jesus was, but many people did follow him. Jesus taught these followers. He even called those who believed in him "friends," because their belief in him gave them a good relationship with him.

Some people did not like what Jesus was teaching, and they had Jesus arrested. Just as God said through the spokesman Isaiah, **Jesus was whipped, and beaten, and he died. But just as God had said, Jesus was given life again!**

Jesus then appeared to many of his followers and continued to teach them. He told them, "Go and tell people about me and all that has happened. **Teach them to obey what I have taught you, and when they believe in me, baptize them.** This symbolic washing in water shows that **they have turned from their disobedience and turned to God through believing in me.** I will send God's Spirit to you, and you will receive power to tell people about me everywhere."

One day, Jesus was taken up in a cloud to heaven. While the followers were watching, two angels appeared and said, **"Jesus will come back the same way you saw him go!"**

Just as Jesus promised, he did send God's Spirit to his followers. The Spirit gave them the power to tell people everywhere about Jesus, and that's what followers of Jesus have been doing ever since! **When people believe in him, they are baptized to show that they have turned from their disobedience and turned to God through believing in Jesus.** Followers of Jesus then meet together to praise God, learn about Jesus, and meet one another's needs.

And this is what I do. I tell people about Jesus.

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Creation

Genesis 1:1-28, 31, 2:2-3, 7-9, 15-18, 21-23

Genesis 1:1-25

In the beginning, *there was God. He spoke, and when he did, he created the whole world and everything in it---the light and water, the sun and moon and stars, and all the animals.*

Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7

But then, he made a special creation. He made man, and he patterned man after himself...He formed the man from the dirt of the ground, and he breathed...into him, and he came to life.

Genesis 2:8-9, 15

...God planted a *beautiful garden...and...placed the man there...to take care of it and watch over it. He showed the man two trees in the middle of the garden. One was a tree of life, and the other, the tree of understanding of good and evil.*

Genesis 2:16-17

He told the man, "You can eat the fruit of every tree in the garden, except the tree of the understanding of good and evil, because if you eat it, you will die."

Genesis 2:18

Then...God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."

Genesis 2:21-23

So he put the man...into a deep sleep...and formed a woman from him. When the man saw her, he was amazed and said "Wow, she looks just like me!"

Genesis 1:28, 31

God cared for them...then he looked over all he had made, and he saw it was very good!...

Genesis 2:2-3

He did all these things in six days, then he set apart the seventh day for himself.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, tell the story again, but slowly and pausing after each sentence. Ask the children to create sign language for each line. Then ask a volunteer to narrate the story while the group demonstrates the motions.

Depending upon the number of children, this activity may be done in small groups, with a volunteer narrating from each group. Have additional volunteers share the story with or without their sign language after the group discussion.

"He made man, and he patterned man after himself."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Set apart" has been used in place of "holy," "cared for" has been used in place of "blessed," "understanding" has been used in place of "knowledge," and "patterned after himself" has been used in place of "made in the image of God."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
Adam's response to Eve is a literal rendering of "flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone." Explain his reaction if necessary.
3. What did you learn about God?
4. What did you learn about people?
Note the difference between the formation of man and that of the rest of creation and consider the implications.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Disobedience

Genesis 3:1-24

Transition

The man and the woman lived in perfect relationship with God. He walked with them, talked with them, and took care of them, until the man and woman disobeyed God.

Genesis 3:1-5

One day, Satan entered the snake, the sneakiest of all the animals...He asked the woman "Did God really say you cannot eat any of the fruit...in the garden?" "Of course we can..." the woman said. "It's only the fruit from the tree that gives the understanding of good and evil that we cannot eat. God said we cannot eat or touch it, or we will die." The snake said "You won't die!...God knows that...when you eat it...you will be like him...and know both good and evil."

Genesis 3:6-7

The woman believed the snake...the fruit looked delicious and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took...the fruit and ate it...She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it, too. As soon as they did, they felt something strange---they felt shame...

Genesis 3:8-13

That evening...they heard God walking...in the garden, so they hid from him...God called to the man, "Where are you?" The man told God he hid because he was afraid...God asked, "Have you eaten the...fruit I told you not to eat?" "Yes," the man said, "but the woman...gave me the fruit and I ate it." ...God asked the woman, "Why did you do this?" "The snake tricked me...that's why I ate it," the woman said.

Genesis 3:14-24

God then punished the snake and the man and woman for their disobedience. Then...God said, "...What if they eat the fruit from the tree of life? If they do, they will live forever!" God did not want them to live in disobedience forever, so he sent them out of the garden, and blocked the entrance.

TEACHING

Before telling the story, instruct the children to be listening for several keywords. Assign actions for them to perform each time they hear that word. Examples include "God", "snake," "disobedience," "eat," and "blocked." For example, when you say the word 'snake,' instruct the children to wiggle like a snake and hiss. Tell the story twice with the action words, then ask a child to narrate while the others perform the actions. Discuss and have the children share the story in small groups.

"Have you eaten the fruit I told you not to eat?"

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The term "disobedience" is used in place of "sin," "understanding" has been used in place of "knowledge," and the nakedness of the man and women is referred to as "shame."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Consider the reason God sent the man and woman out of the garden and what this reveals about him. Highlight God's fulfilled promise concerning the consequences of eating the fruit.
4. What did you learn about people?
Discuss the changes in the relationship between people and God following the people's disobedience. Point out the ways that Satan deceived the woman and how we see such temptation in our own lives.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Abraham

Genesis 12:1-7, 15:1-6

Transition

The man and woman's disobedience separated them from God, but God did not forget his special creation. God wanted a relationship with his people. God wanted to make a people group that would be his very own, so he chose one man named Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-3

God came to Abraham and said, "Leave your home and your... family...and go to the land that I will show you. I will make your children and their children and their children into a great people group. I will bless you and make you famous, and...the whole world will be blessed through you."

Genesis 12:4-6

So Abraham obeyed God and left his home. He was seventy-five years old when he left...He took his wife Sarah...all his riches, and all...his household and headed for the land God would show him. When they arrived... Abraham camped next to a huge tree.

Genesis 12:7

Then God appeared to Abraham and said, "I will give this land to your family." And Abraham worshiped God there.

Genesis 15:1-3

Some time later, God spoke to Abraham in a vision and said... "Don't be afraid...I will protect you and give you a great reward." But Abraham said, "God, what good are...your promises when I don't even have a son? Because you have not given me any children, one of my servants will receive all my riches."

Genesis 15:4-5

Then God said to him, "...your servants will not receive your riches, because you will have a son..." Then God took Abraham outside and said to him, "Look up into the sky and try to count the stars...That's how big your family will be!"

Genesis 15:6

And Abraham believed God, and God said Abraham had a right relationship with him because of his belief.

TEACHING

After telling the story once, tell it again and change locations when Abraham and his family move. Pretend to worship as a group when Abraham does. Tell the story one more time in a new location. Discuss as a group and share the story together. Go around the circle as each child recites one sentence until the story is complete. Have the children repeat the memory activity as partners tell the story back and forth one line at a time.

"God said Abraham had a right relationship with him because of his belief."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The terms "children" or "family" have been used in place of "descendants," "promise" is used in place of "blessing," "belief" is used in place of "faith," and the name "Abraham" is used throughout the story instead of "Abram."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Encourage children to consider that God had a plan to have a right relationship with people. Highlight the personal aspect of God.
4. What did you learn about people?
Point out the result of Abraham's belief of God's promises. Discuss our tendency to doubt, as Abraham did.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Discuss ways that we have opportunities to worship and obey God.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

David

1 Samuel 16:1-13, 2 Samuel 7:1-16, 18-25, 28

Transition

God did keep his promise to Abraham. He had a child who had children, who then had children, until they became a huge people group. God raised up many leaders for his people. One of these leaders was a man named David. This is the story of how he became king.

1 Samuel 16:1-4

One day, God said to Samuel, his spokesman, "...go to Bethlehem. Find a certain man who lives there, because I have chosen one of his sons to be my king...Invite him to worship, and I will show you which one of his sons I have chosen." So Samuel did as God told him...

1 Samuel 16:6-7

When they arrived, Samuel took one look at the first son and thought "He must be the one God wants as king!" But God said to him, "...I have not chosen him. I don't make decisions the way people do. People judge by what they see on the outside, but I look at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:10-13

...All seven of the sons were shown to Samuel. But Samuel said "...God has not chosen any of these." Then he asked, "Are these all your sons?" "There is still the youngest," the father replied. "But he's out...watching the sheep..." When this son, David, was brought in, God told Samuel "This is the one I choose..." So as David stood there with his brothers, Samuel poured oil on his head to show he was the next king. And the Spirit of God came powerfully on David from that day on...

2 Samuel 7:1-16

Many years passed, and like God said, David became the new king, and God brought peace to his land...One day, David called for Nathan, another of God's spokesmen...God told Nathan to say to David, " ... I chose you to lead my people...when you were only a shepherd boy, watching your sheep in the field... Now I will make you famous throughout the earth!...Your family will be one of kings!...One of your descendants will always rule and...If he disobeys, I will punish him. But my love is unfailing... Your...kingdom will continue...forever."

2 Samuel 7:18-25, 28

When David heard this message from God, he praised God. He believed God, and he said, "O God, do as you have promised...For you are God...Your words are truth and you promise good things to those who love you..."

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have the children reenact the scene. Depending upon the size of the group, you may need to divide the children into smaller groups. After parts have been assigned, ask the children to mime the actions while you narrate. The second time, have a child narrate and assigned children recite the lines of God, Samuel, David, his father, and Nathan. After reenacting the scene, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other.

"Your words are truth and you promise good things to those who love you."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The term "spokesman" has been used in place of "prophet."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?

Point out the promises God made and kept in this story. Highlight the way that God describes his love. How has this truth been confirmed through the stories?

4. What did you learn about people?

Discuss ways God's judgment and decisions differ from those of people and how the differences are seen in this story.

Ensure the children grasp that God had a plan to redeem all people, but also has plans for each of us, as he did for David.

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

Consider changes the children can make to see people the way God does. Encourage participants to trust and surrender to God's plans for their lives.

6. How will you remember this story?

Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

Promise

Isaiah 53:2-7, 11-12

Transition

After David, other kings ruled over God's people, but the kings disobeyed God and led the people to disobey God. In spite of this, God continued to send spokesmen to give his people messages from him. One of the spokesmen was named Isaiah, and he brought a message of hope to the people: God would send his people a Savior to bring them freedom! This is what God said through Isaiah:

Isaiah 53:2-3

...There will be nothing beautiful or royal about the Promised Savior. We will turn our backs on him and look the other way. He will be hated and rejected, and we won't care.

Isaiah 53:4-5

He will carry our weaknesses...We will think his troubles are a punishment from God...for his own disobedience...But he will be beaten so we can have peace...whipped so we can be healed!

Isaiah 53:6

All of us...have strayed away like sheep. We have left God's paths to follow our own. But God will put on him the disobedience of us all.

Isaiah 53:7

He will be treated badly, but will never say a word. He will be taken like a lamb to be killed. And like a sheep is silent when it is going to be shaved, he will not open his mouth.

Isaiah 53:11

After his suffering...he will have...life again....And because of his experience, the Promised Savior will make it possible for many to have a right relationship with God, for he will carry all their disobedience.

Isaiah 53:12

God will give him the honors given to one who is mighty and great, because he took the place of the disobedient."

Transition

So God's people waited for Him to send this Promised Savior.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have each child individually reenact a portion of the story, like Charades. The rest of the children then guess what the child is portraying. After reenacting the scenes, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other and have one or more children share the story with the group.

"The Promised Savior will make it possible for many to have a right relationship with God."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Spokesman" has been used in place of "prophet," "disobedience" in place of "sin," "right relationship" in place of "righteousness," and "Promised Savior" is used to describe Jesus.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Highlight God's plan for relationship with His people and take note of the promises detailed in the story.
4. What did you learn about people?
Explain that God punishes disobedience and how that relates to us. Note that Jesus is the only way for people to have a right relationship with God.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Encourage children to trust while waiting for promises to be fulfilled. Discuss ways to show Jesus the honor he deserves.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Birth

**Luke 1:26-35, 2:1-7, 22, 25, 28, 30-34, 39-40,
Matthew 1:20-21**

Transition

After many years, God did send the Promised Savior. This is his story:

Luke 1:26-35

...A young girl named Mary was engaged to be married to a man called Joseph, a descendant of David. One day an angel from God appeared to her and said "...God will cause you to give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great...and will be called the Son of...God."

Matthew 1:20-21

An angel confirmed these things to Joseph, and told him this child would save people from their disobedience.

Luke 2:1-7

The ruler announced that all the people in the country would be counted, so everyone had to go back to their hometown. Because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem...his family's ancient home. He took with him Mary who was very pregnant. When they finally arrived, the baby was ready to be born, but there were so many people in town there were no rooms available at any of the inns. Mary gave birth to the baby in the same place the animals were kept, and after he was born, she wrapped him up and laid him in a feeding tray.

Luke 2:22, 25, 28

Several weeks after, Jesus' parents took him to the special city where they worshiped God. When they got there, they met a very old man. God had promised the man that he would not die until he saw the Promised Savior. When he saw Jesus, he rejoiced and praised God.

Luke 2:30-34

He said, "I have seen the Savior...He is a light...to...the nations. He will be rejected by many, but he will be the greatest joy to many others."

Luke 2:39-40

Jesus' parents returned home. Jesus grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God was happy with him.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, begin to tell the story again, but stop at random points and have children fill in keywords. You may repeat this activity several times, leaving out additional words each time. Discuss as a group and share the story together. Start the story by sharing the first line, then go around the circle as each child recites one sentence until the story is complete. Conduct the same activity with partners, as they go back and forth sharing one line at a time.

*"God will cause you to
give birth to a son, and
you will name him Jesus."*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The term "Promised Savior" is used to describe Jesus, and "disobedience" has been used in place of "sin." Jerusalem is also described, rather than named. "God was happy with [Jesus]" is used for "God's favor was on him."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Consider reasons God would have chosen for this important event to occur as it did. Compare the promises made in Isaiah 53 with the angel's confirmation to Joseph and the statement made in the temple in Jerusalem.
4. What did you learn about people?
Discuss ways our own reasoning and plans so differ from God's and how we respond to these differences.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Highlight the ways that people in this story trusted God's promises and how that affected their actions.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Baptism

Luke 3:1-3, 15-16, 21-22,

Matthew 3:7-9,13-16

Transition

Jesus grew to be a young man. God sent a spokesman ahead of him to prepare the way for the people to receive the Promised Savior, Jesus.

Luke 3:1-2

After some time, a message from God came to a man named John...who lived in the wilderness.

Luke 3:3

...John went from place to place...telling people that they should be baptized, which is when someone is washed in water to show that they have turned away from disobedience and turned to God to be forgiven.

Matthew 3:7-9

He said, "Prove by the way that you live that you have turned away from your disobedience and turned to God."

Luke 3:15-16

Everyone was expecting the Promised Savior to come soon, and they wanted to know if John was the one they were waiting for. John told them, "I baptize you with water, but the one who is coming soon...is greater than I am---so much greater that I'm not even worthy to be his slave...He will baptize you with God's Spirit..."

Luke 3:21

One day when people were being baptized, Jesus himself came...

Matthew 3:13-16

... to be baptized by John, even though Jesus had never sinned. But John tried to change his mind. "I...need to be baptized by you...why are you coming to me?" But Jesus said, "I must do all that God requires." So John agreed to baptize him.

Luke 3:21-22

Afterwards, as he was praying, the heavens opened, and God's Spirit came down in the form of a dove. Then God spoke from heaven and said, "You are my... Son. I love you, and you bring me great joy."

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, split the children into groups. Ask the children to use their creativity to tell a portion of the story through a song. This activity typically works best if the children use the melody of a song they know and change the lyrics accordingly. Give them an assigned amount of time to work on their short song. The groups should then share their work with the others. Discuss as a group and have each child retell the story within their small groups.

*"You are my Son. I love
you, and you bring me
great joy."*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The term "spokesman" is used in place of "prophet," "disobedience" is used in place of "sin," and "God's Spirit" has been used in place of "Holy Spirit." Baptism must also be thoroughly explained in the story.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Point out how God refers to Jesus. Ensure that the children understand that Jesus had not sinned. This is supported by 2 Cor. 5:21. Discuss why he would have chosen to be baptized.
4. What did you learn about people?
Children should grasp that though we are unworthy, God chooses to use us.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Encourage conversation about how our lives prove that we have turned to God. Ask children to consider that if Jesus was willing to do all that God requires, how much more should we?
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Paralyzed Man

Luke 5:17-26

Transition

God continued to show that Jesus was the Promised Savior as he gave him the power to do great miracles.

Luke 5:17

One day...Jesus was teaching a *huge crowd*. Some *religious leaders* had come from every village around to hear him, and they sat to listen. Through God's power, Jesus was healing the sick.

Luke 5:18-19

Some men came carrying *their friend* on a sleeping mat, because *he could not walk*. They tried to take him inside to Jesus, but they couldn't reach him because of the crowd. *Instead*, they went to the roof and took off some tiles. Then they lowered the *man who could not walk* on his mat down into the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

Luke 5:20

Jesus saw *their belief* and said to the sick man, "*Friend, your disobedience is forgiven.*"

Luke 5:21

...The *religious leaders in the crowd* heard this, and thought to themselves, "*How can Jesus say this? Only God can forgive disobedience!*"

Luke 5:22-24

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "*Why are you thinking this in your hearts? Do you think it is easier to say, 'Your disobedience is forgiven', or to say, 'Stand up and walk'?...I will prove to you that I have authority...to forgive disobedience.*"

Then Jesus turned to *the man who could not walk* and said, "*Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!*"

Luke 5:25-26

...Immediately...the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and went home praising God. *All the people there were in awe and also praised God. They said*, "We have seen amazing things today!"

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have the children reenact the scene. Depending upon the size of the group, you may need to divide the children into smaller groups. After parts have been assigned, ask the children to mime the actions while you narrate. The second time, have a child narrate and assigned children recite the lines of Jesus and the religious leaders. After reenacting the scene, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other.

*"Friend, your
disobedience is
forgiven."*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Disobedience" has been used in place of "sin," "religious leaders" has been used in place of "Pharisees," and the man who is healed is described as one who "could not walk" instead of "paralytic."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?

In reference to Jesus' address of the paralytic as friend, discuss the personal aspects of a relationship with him. Ensure that the children fully grasp that Jesus' physical healing of the paralytic shows he is able to provide spiritual healing through forgiveness of sin.

4. What did you learn about people?
Note the response of both the man and the crowd.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Discuss how and why the friends brought the paralytic to Jesus and how they can apply that principle in their friendships.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Man with Evil Spirits

Mark 5:1-20

Mark 5:1-2

Jesus and some of his close followers were crossing a lake in boat. When they arrived at the other side of the lake...a man filled with an evil spirit came...to meet Jesus.

Mark 5:3-5

This man lived where the dead were buried...and no one was strong enough to control him. When he was put into chains...he would snap them from his wrists!...He wandered all day and all night while he screamed and cut himself with sharp stones.

Mark 5:6-8

When...he saw Jesus, the man...ran to...him and bowed at his feet...Jesus...said, "Come out of the man, you evil spirit." The man screamed, "Why are you bothering me, Jesus, Son of...God?...I beg you, don't torture me!"

Mark 5:9-13

Then Jesus asked, "What is your name?" And he replied, "...Many, because there are many of us inside of this man". ...There was a huge herd of pigs feeding...nearby. "Send us into those pigs," the spirits begged...So Jesus gave them permission. The evil spirits came out of the man and entered the pigs, and all 2,000 pigs ran down the...hill and drowned in the lake.

Mark 5: 14-17

The men who cared for the pigs ran and told others what happened. People rushed out...and saw the man who had been filled with an evil spirit...sitting quietly and normal. The people were afraid...and asked Jesus to go away and leave them alone.

Mark 5:18-20

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been filled with an evil spirit begged to go with him. But Jesus said, "No, go home to your family and friends and tell them everything God has done for you..." So the man...visited all of the towns around and began to tell the great things Jesus had done for him, and everyone was amazed at what he told them.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have the children reenact the scene. Depending upon the size of the group, you may need to divide the children into smaller groups. After parts have been assigned, ask the children to mime the actions while you narrate. The second time, have a child narrate and assigned children recite the lines of Jesus and the possessed man. After reenacting the scene, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other.

*"Come out of the man,
you evil spirit!"*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The phrase "evil spirit" is used in place of "demon," "filled with an evil spirit" is used in place of "possessed," and the name "Legion" is simplified to "Many" for easier understanding.

1. What did you like?

2. What confused you?

Additional explanation may be needed concerning the evil spirits and their opposition to God. Some cultures view possession in a positive light, so ensure the audience understands that the spirit was harmful and Jesus saved the man.

3. What did you learn about God?

Discuss the power and authority displayed by Jesus in this story.

4. What did you learn about people?

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

Emphasize the command to share what God has done with others and how we can use stories to obey this command.

6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

Water

Matthew 14:22-33

Transition

Jesus continued to travel and taught many people.

Matthew 14:22-24

One day, after speaking to a large crowd, Jesus insisted that his closest followers get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home...He then went up into the hills by himself to pray until it was dark. Meanwhile, his closest followers were in trouble far away from land, because a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves.

Matthew 14:25-26

About three o'clock in the morning, Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the closest followers saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they shouted, "It's a ghost!"

Matthew 14:27

But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "*Be courageous. I am here!*"

Matthew 14:28-29

Then Peter called to him, "*Master*, if it's really you, tell me to walk to you...on the water."
"Yes, come," Jesus said.
So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus.

Matthew 14:30-31

But when *Peter* saw the strong wind and the waves, he was *afraid* and began to sink. "Save me, *Master!*" he shouted. Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him and said, "You have so little *belief*...Why did you doubt me?"

Matthew 14:32-33

When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. Then *his closest followers* worshiped him. "You really are the Son of God!" they said.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have the children make up sign language to correspond with the story as you tell it again. You may have them work individually or in groups. After they have chosen motions, have children tell the story with their motions. Discuss as a group and share the story together. Go around the circle as each child recites one sentence until the story is complete.

*" Be courageous.
I am here!"*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The term "closest followers" is used in place of "disciples," "Master" is used in place of "Lord," "belief" is used in place of "faith."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Discuss the power and authority displayed in this story.
4. What did you learn about people?
This story shows the fear that we succumb to when we don't keep our eyes on Jesus. Have the children discuss times that they have been afraid, and ask if anyone has an example of how Jesus helped them.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Discuss what it means to keep your eyes on Jesus in our practical lives. What could Peter have done to allay his fear? What can we do?
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Sight

Luke 18:15-17, 31-42

Luke 18:15-17

One day some parents brought their little children to Jesus so he could touch them and bless them, but *Jesus' closest followers* told them not to bother him. Then Jesus called for the children and said to *his followers*, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them!... anyone who doesn't have their kind of *belief* will never experience a *relationship with God*."

Luke 18:31-34

Gathering *his twelve closest followers* around him, Jesus told them, "As you know, we are going to Jerusalem. And when we get there, all the predictions of the ancient *spokesmen* concerning *me* will come true. *I* will be handed over to *soldiers* to be mocked, treated shamefully, and spit upon. They will whip *me* and kill *me*, but on the third day *I* will rise again." But they didn't understand a thing he said. ...

Luke 18:35-39

As they approached a *nearby town*, a blind beggar was sitting beside the road. When he heard the noise of a crowd going past, he asked what was happening. They told him that Jesus ... was going by. So he began shouting, "Jesus, *descendant of David*, have mercy on me!" The crowds ahead of Jesus tried to hush the man, but he only shouted louder, "*Descendant of David*, have mercy on me!"

Luke 18:40-42

When Jesus heard him, he stopped and ordered that the man be brought to him. Then Jesus asked the man, "What do you want me to do for you?"
"...I want to see!"
And Jesus said, "All right, you can see! Your *belief* has healed you." Instantly the man could see, and he followed Jesus, praising God. And all who saw it praised God, too.

TEACHING

This story can be divided into three sections. Divide the group into three smaller groups and have each group learn and act out their part. Then have the entire group act out each section in sequence.

"...You can see! Your belief has healed you!"

DISCOVERY

"Closest followers" has been used in place of "disciples," "relationship with God" in place of "kingdom of God," "spokesmen" in place of "prophet," "descendant" in place of "son," and "belief" in place of "faith."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
You might need to discuss with the children what they think Jesus meant when he talked about the kind of belief a child has.
3. What did you learn about God?
4. What did you learn about people?
When the blind man continued to try to talk to Jesus, what happened?
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Arrest and Trial

Luke 22:32-34, 51, John 18:1-5, 10, 12-13, 15-17, 25-27, Matthew 26:59-63, 75, 27:26

Transition

Though many were amazed at what Jesus was doing, not everyone praised him. Some religious leaders were jealous and did not like what he was teaching, and they plotted with one of his closest followers to betray him in order to have Jesus arrested. Their plan was actually part of God's plan, which he told through his spokesman, Isaiah, hundreds of years before. Many people had come to Jerusalem for an important religious festival. Jesus and his closest followers also arrived and were sharing a meal to celebrate this festival.

Luke 22:32-34

During the meal, Jesus said to Peter, "...I have been praying for you, Peter, that you will always believe..." Peter said, "Jesus, I will go to prison with you, and even...die with you." But Jesus said, "Peter... before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me."

John 18:1-5

After he said this, Jesus went to a garden with some of his closest followers. His betrayer, who was another of his closest followers, arrived with a group of soldiers and...guards...who were carrying blazing torches...and weapons...Jesus knew all that was going to happen to him, so he stepped forward to meet them. "Who are you looking for?" he asked. "Jesus..." they replied. "I am he," Jesus said...

John 18:10, Luke 22:51

When they were about to take Jesus, Peter drew a sword and cut off the right ear of...one of the men. But Jesus said, "No more of this." And he touched the man's ear and healed him.

John 18:12-13, 15-17

The soldiers...and...guards arrested Jesus and tied him up...They took him to the home of the head religious leader. Peter followed. When Peter was let inside, a woman asked him, "You're not one of that man's closest followers, are you?" "No," he said, "I am not."

Matthew 26:59-63

Inside the home, the religious leaders had gathered, and Jesus was accused of many things he had not done. Then the head religious leader stood up and said to Jesus, "Well, aren't you going to answer...?" But Jesus remained silent...

John 18:25-27, Matthew 26:75

Meanwhile...Peter was...asked...again, "You're not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it, saying, "No, I am not." But...a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Didn't I see you out there... with Jesus?" Again Peter denied it. And immediately a rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had promised: "Before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me." And he went outside and wept.

Matthew 27:26

After his trial, Jesus was ordered to be whipped with a lead tipped whip, then he was turned...over to the...soldiers to be killed.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have the children reenact the scene. Depending upon the size of the group, you may need to divide the children into smaller groups. After parts have been assigned, ask the children to mime the actions while you narrate. The second time, have a child narrate and assigned children recite the lines of Jesus, Peter, guards, the crowd, and the religious leaders. After reenacting the scene, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other.

"You will deny three times that you even know me."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The term "believe" has been used in place of "have faith," "killed" in place of "crucified," and "disciples" are referred to as the "closest followers."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Discuss the fulfillment of promises from other stories, including Jesus' silence and being whipped and killed.
4. What did you learn about people?
Encourage discussion about Peter and our similarities to him. Compare the words and actions of Jesus and Peter throughout the stories.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Consider ways we can tell others and show through our actions whom we are following.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Death and Life

Matthew 27:60,

Luke 23:33-35, 44-46, 53, 24:1-7

Transition

After Jesus was whipped with the lead tipped whip, he was given to the soldiers to be killed.

Luke 23:33-35

...soldiers hammered nails through Jesus' hands and feet and nailed him to two planks of wood called a cross...The people mocked him. They said, "Let him save himself if he is really God's Promised Savior."

Luke 23:34, 44-46

As he was dying, he said, "Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they are doing." At noon that day, the entire area became as dark as night for three hours. Then Jesus died.

Luke 23:53, Matthew 27:60

A man took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in...cloth and laid it in a...tomb...in a rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance and left.

Luke 24:1-7

Three days later, some women went to the tomb...They saw that the stone had been rolled away...and that Jesus' body was not there. Suddenly, two angels appeared...and said, "...He isn't here! He has risen from the dead! Remember what he told you...that he must be killed, and that he would rise again on the third day."

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, tell the story again, but slowly and pausing after each sentence. Ask the children to create sign language for each line. Then ask a volunteer to narrate the story while the group demonstrates the motions. Depending upon the number of children, this activity may be done in small groups, with a volunteer narrating from each group. Have additional volunteers share the story with or without their sign language after the group discussion

"He isn't here! He has risen from the dead!"

DISCOVERY

"Kill" has been used in place of "crucify," and "Promised Savior" in place of "Messiah." The cross has been described for those who don't know what it is.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?

Ensure that the children understand Jesus was without sin. Emphasize that Jesus was dead, but is now alive.

3. What did you learn about God?

Point out his faithfulness to his plan and willingness to sacrifice his son and discuss why such a sacrifice was necessary. Highlight the fulfillment of prophecy and the magnitude of his desire for a personal relationship with us.

4. What did you learn about people?

If the audience consists of believers, discuss ways their life or walk with God would be different without his death and resurrection.

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

6. How will you remember this story?

Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

Spirit

Luke 24, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8-11, 2:1-4

Luke 24

After he rose, Jesus appeared to his followers and explained to them that everything had taken place to fulfill God's plan. Just as God said, he had suffered, died and risen from the dead on the third day to take the punishment for our disobedience and give us a right relationship with God. He said, "This is the Good News you must take to all people."

Mathew 28:19-20

So..."Go and make followers of all people, baptize them...and teach them to obey my commands. And be sure of this: I am with you always..."

Acts 1:8

Later, he told them, "...You will receive power when God's Spirit comes...and you will...tell people about me everywhere...to all parts of the earth.

Acts 1:9-11

After he said this, he was taken up into a cloud...to heaven. Two angels in white robes suddenly appeared and said, "...Why are you...staring at the sky? Someday Jesus...will return...the same way you saw him go!"

Transition

Jesus' followers remembered what He had said and waited for the promised Spirit.

Acts 2:1-4

Jesus' followers were meeting together at the time of an important religious festival. Suddenly...a sound...like...a mighty windstorm...filled the house where they were sitting, and something that looked like...fire came and rested on each of them. The followers were filled with God's Spirit, and the Spirit gave them the ability to speak in languages they had never spoken before!

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, begin to tell the story again, but stop at random points and have children fill in keywords. You may repeat this activity several times, leaving out additional words each time. Discuss as a group and share the story together. Start the story by sharing the first line, then go around the circle as each child recites one sentence until the story is complete. Conduct the same activity with partners, as they go back and forth sharing one line at a time.

*"You will receive power
when God's Spirit
comes"*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Good News" has been used in place of "Gospel," "followers" has been used in place of "disciples," and "God's Spirit" has been used in place of "Holy Spirit." We have chosen to identify the white-robed men as angels to avoid confusion.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Encourage conversation about God's love for all people, as seen in his command to share the Good News in all parts of the earth. Discuss the continued fulfillment of promises and the promise of His return, which we continue to await.
4. What did you learn about people?
Point out God's power and how that power continues to fill believers.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Emphasize the command to share with people throughout the earth and how we can use stories to obey this command.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Church

Acts 2:5-16, 22-24, 33-39, 41-47

Transition

Although Jesus' followers understood that God's Spirit had come just as Jesus promised, others were confused.

Acts 2:5-13

People from every nation were gathered in the city for the religious festival and heard the followers speaking their own languages. Some in the crowd were...amazed and asked each other, "What can this mean?" but others laughed at them.

Acts 2:14-16

Peter, one of Jesus' closest followers, stepped forward...and shouted to the crowd: "What you are seeing is something that was predicted hundreds of years ago..."

Acts 2:22-24, 33-36

"...God...did powerful miracles and wonders...through Jesus...but...you murdered him. But God raised Jesus from the dead...now he sits in heaven with God. And God, just like he...promised, has sent his Spirit to be with us, just as you see and hear now...The Jesus that you murdered is Master and Promised Savior!"

Acts 2:37-39

When the people heard this, their hearts were touched, and they said..."What should we do?" Peter replied "You must turn from your sins and to God, and be baptized in Jesus' name for forgiveness from your disobedience...and you will receive...God's Spirit. This promise is for everyone."

Acts 2:41

That day, three thousand people believed the Good News and were baptized to show that they were turning away from their disobedience and turned to God.

Acts 2:42-47

And each day, God added more and more people to this group of followers, who were devoted to teaching, meeting together, remembering Jesus, and to praying to God.

Transition

To this day, followers of Jesus are still meeting together, praising God, and sharing the Good News about Jesus as we look forward to Jesus' return from heaven.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, tell the story again, but slowly and pausing after each sentence. Ask the children to create sign language for each line. Then ask a volunteer to narrate the story while the group demonstrates the motions.

Depending upon the number of children, this activity may be done in small groups, with a volunteer narrating from each group. Have additional volunteers share the story with or without their sign language after the group discussion

"And God, just like he promised, has sent his Spirit to be with us."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The phrase "God's Spirit" has been used in place of "Holy Spirit" and "disciples" are referred to as the "closest followers." Be sure to be consistent in your use of terms from previous stories.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?

Discuss the faithfulness of God to his promises throughout the stories.

4. What did you learn about people?

Highlight the various reactions to the Good News in the story and compare them with the reactions to the Good News that the children have observed.

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

Emphasize the importance of baptism and meeting together with other followers.

Encourage discussion about the different ways the children see the activities of the early church observed in their churches today.

6. How will you remember this story?

Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

APPENDIX I

Ten Story Set

This story set is based on the same redemptive theme of God as friend and promise-keeper, but gives you the option of completing the set in ten sessions.

Creation

Genesis 1:1-28, 31, 2:2-3, 7-9, 15-18, 21-23

Genesis 1:1-25

In the beginning, *there was God. He spoke, and when he did, he created the whole world and everything in it---the light and water, the sun and moon and stars, and all the animals.*

Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7

But then, he made a special creation. He made man, and he patterned man after himself...He formed the man from the dirt of the ground, and he breathed...into him, and he came to life.

Genesis 2:8-9, 15

...God planted a *beautiful garden...and...placed the man there...to take care of it and watch over it. He showed the man two trees in the middle of the garden. One was a tree of life, and the other, the tree of understanding of good and evil.*

Genesis 2:16-17

He told the man, "You can eat the fruit of every tree in the garden, except the tree of the understanding of good and evil, because if you eat it, you will die."

Genesis 2:18

Then...God said "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."

Genesis 2:21-23

So he put the man...into a deep sleep...and formed a woman from him. When the man saw her, he was amazed and said "Wow, she looks just like me!"

Genesis 1:28,31

God cared for them...then he looked over all he had made., and he saw it was very good!...

Genesis 2:2-3

He did all these things in six days, then he set apart the seventh day for himself.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, tell the story again, but slowly and pausing after each sentence. Ask the children to create "sign language" for each line. Then ask a volunteer to narrate the story while the group demonstrates the motions. Depending upon the number of children, this activity may be done in small groups, with a volunteer narrating from each group. Have additional volunteers share the story with or without their sign language after the group discussion.

" He made man, and he patterned man after himself. "

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Set apart" has been used in place of "holy," "cared for" has been used in place of "blessed," "understanding" has been used in place of "knowledge," and "patterned after himself" has been used in place of "made in the image of God."

1. What did you like?

2. What confused you?

Adam's response to Eve is a literal rendering of "flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone." Explain his reaction if necessary.

3. What did you learn about God?

4. What did you learn about people?

Note the difference between the formation of man and that of the rest of creation and consider the implications.

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

6. How will you remember this story? Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

Disobedience

Genesis 3:1-24

Transition

The man and the woman lived in perfect relationship with God. He walked with them, talked with them, and took care of them, until the man and woman disobeyed God.

Genesis 3:1-5

One day, Satan entered the snake, the sneakiest of all the... animals...He asked the woman "Did God really say you cannot eat any of the fruit...in the garden?" "Of course we can..."the woman said. "It's only the fruit from the tree that gives the understanding of good and evil that we cannot eat. God said we cannot eat or touch it, or we will die." The snake said "You won't die!...God knows that...when you eat it...you will be like him...and know both good and evil."

Genesis 3:6-7

The woman believed the snake...the fruit looked delicious and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took...the fruit and ate it...She also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate it, too. As soon as they did, they felt something strange---they felt shame...

Genesis 3:8-13

That evening...they heard God walking...in the garden, so they hid from him...God called to the man, "Where are you?" The man told God he hid because he was afraid...God asked, "Have you eaten the...fruit I told you not to eat?" "Yes," the man said, "but the woman...gave me the fruit and I ate it." ...God asked the woman, "Why did you do this?" "The snake tricked me...that's why I ate it," the woman said.

Genesis 3:14-24

God then punished the snake and the man and woman for their disobedience. Then...God said, "...What if they eat the fruit from the tree of life? If they do, they will live forever!" God did not want them to live in disobedience forever, so he sent them out of the garden, and blocked the entrance.

TEACHING

Before telling the story, instruct the children to be listening for several keywords. Assign actions for them to perform each time they hear that word. Examples include "God", "snake," "disobedience," "eat," and "blocked." For example, when you say the word 'snake,' instruct the children to wiggle like a snake and hiss. Tell the story twice with the action words, then ask a child to narrate while the others perform the actions. Discuss and have the children share the story in small groups.

"Have you eaten the fruit I told you not to eat?"

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The term "disobedience" is used in place of "sin," "understanding" has been used in place of "knowledge," and the nakedness of the man and women is referred to as shame.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Consider the reason God sent the man and woman out of the garden and what this reveals about him. Highlight God's fulfilled promise concerning the consequences of eating the fruit.
4. What did you learn about people?
Discuss the changes in the relationship between people and God following disobedience. Point out the ways the Satan deceived the woman and how we see such temptation in our own lives.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Abraham

Genesis 12:1-7,15:1-6

Transition

The man and woman's disobedience separated them from God, but God did not forget his special creation. God wanted a relationship with his people. God wanted to make a people group that would be his very own, so he chose one man named Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-3

God came to Abraham and said, "Leave your home and your... family...and go to the land that I will show you. I will make your children and their children and their children into a great people group. I will bless you and make you famous, and...the whole world will be blessed through you."

Genesis 12:4-6

So Abraham obeyed God and left his home. He was seventy-five years old when he left...He took his wife Sarah,...all his riches, and all...his household and headed for the land God would show him. When they arrived... Abraham camped next to a huge tree.

Genesis 12:7

Then God appeared to Abraham and said, "I will give this land to your family." And Abraham worshiped God there.

Genesis 15:1-3

Some time later, God spoke to Abraham in a vision and said... "Don't be afraid...I will protect you and give you a great reward." But Abraham said, "God, what good are...your promises when I don't even have a son? Because you have not given me any children, one of my servants will receive all my riches."

Genesis 15:4-5

Then God said to him, "...your servants will not receive your riches, because you will have a son..." Then God took Abraham outside and said to him, "Look up into the sky and try to count the stars...That's how big your family will be!"

Genesis 15:6

And Abraham believed God, and God said Abraham had a right relationship with him because of his belief.

TEACHING

After telling the story once, tell it again and change locations when Abraham and his family move. Pretend to worship as a group when Abraham does. Tell the story one more time in a new location. Discuss as a group and share the story together. Go around the circle as each child recites one sentence until the story is complete. Have the children repeat the memory activity as partners tell the story back and forth one line at a time.

*" God said Abraham had
a right relationship
with him because of
his belief. "*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The terms "children" or "family" have been used in place of "descendants," "promise" is used in place of "blessing," "belief" is used in place of "faith," and the name Abraham is used throughout the story instead of Abram to avoid confusion.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Encourage children to consider that God had a plan to have a right relationship with people. Highlight the personal aspect of God.
4. What did you learn about people?
Point out the result of Abraham's belief of God's promises. Discuss our tendency to doubt, as Abraham did.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Discuss opportunities for worship and obedience.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Promise and Birth

Isaiah 53, Luke 1:26-35, 2:1-7, 22, 25, 28, 30-34, 39-40, Matthew 1:20-21

Transition

Just as God promised, Abraham's children became a great nation. Even though they often disobeyed God, He still wanted to have a relationship with them. God sent many spokesmen to give his people messages from him, and to tell them of the Savior he would send so they could have a good relationship with him. One of those spokesmen was Isaiah.

Isaiah 53

He said, "The Savior that God will send will suffer. Although he has done nothing wrong, he will be beaten and whipped so we can be healed. God will put all of our disobedience onto the Promised Savior, and he will be punished and killed, but then have life again. Because of this, many people will have a right relationship with God".

Transition

The people waited for this Savior to come, and after many years, he did come. This is his story:

Luke 1:26-35

A young girl named Mary was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph. One day an angel from God appeared to her and said, "...God will cause you to give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great...and will be called the Son of...God."

Matthew 1:20-21

An angel confirmed these things to Joseph, and told him this child would save people from their disobedience.

Luke 2:1-7

...Mary and Joseph traveled to Joseph's hometown, and the time came for the baby to be born...She wrapped him...and laid him a feeding tray for animals, because there was no room for them in any inns.

Luke 2:22,25,28, 30-34

Soon after, Jesus' parents took him to the special city where they worshiped God. When they got there, they met a very old man. God had promised this man that he would not die until he saw the Promised Savior. When he saw Jesus, he rejoiced and praised God. He said, "I have seen the Savior...He is a light...to...the nations. He will be rejected by many, but he will be the greatest joy to many others."

Luke 2:39-40

Jesus and his parents returned home. Jesus grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom, and God was happy with him.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have each child individually reenact a portion of the story, like Charades. The rest of the children then guess what the child is portraying. After reenacting the scenes, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other and have one or more children share the story with the group.

*"God will cause you
to give birth to a son,
and you will name him
Jesus."*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Spokesman" has been used in place of "prophet," "God's Spirit" in place of "Holy Spirit," "right relationship" in place of "righteousness," "disobedience" is used in place of "sin," and "Promised Savior" is used to describe Jesus. Jerusalem is also described, rather than named. "God was happy with [Jesus] is used for "God's favor was on him."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?

Discuss the promise that was fulfilled in this story and how we see that God's timing and plans often differ from our own.

Consider reasons God would have chosen for this important event to occur as it did. Compare the promises made in Isaiah 53 with the angel's confirmation to Joseph and the statement made in the temple in Jerusalem.

4. What did you learn about people?

Explain that God punishes disobedience and how that relates to us. Note that Jesus is the only way for people to have a right relationship with God.

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

Encourage children to trust while waiting for promises to be fulfilled.

6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

Baptism

Luke 3:1-3, 15-16, 21-22, Matthew 3:7-9, 15-16

Transition

Jesus grew to be a young man. God sent a spokesman ahead of him to prepare the way for the people to receive the Promised Savior, Jesus.

Luke 3:1-2

After some time, a message from God came to a man named John...who lived in the wilderness.

Luke 3:3

...John went from place to place...telling people that they should be baptized, which is when someone is washed in water to show that they have turned away from disobedience and turned to God to be forgiven.

Matthew 3:7-9

He said, "Prove by the way that you live that you have turned away from your disobedience and turned to God".

Luke 3:15-16

Everyone was expecting the Promised Savior to come soon, and they wanted to know if John was the one they were waiting for. John told them, "I baptize you with water, but the one who is coming soon...is greater than I am---so much greater that I'm not even worthy to be his slave...He will baptize you with God's Spirit..."

Luke 3:21

One day when people were being baptized, Jesus himself came...

Matthew 3:15-16

... to be baptized by John, even though Jesus had never sinned. But John tried to change his mind. "I...need to be baptized by you...why are you coming to me?" But Jesus said, "I must do all that God requires." So John agreed to baptize him.

Luke 3:21-22

Afterwards, as he was praying, the heavens opened, and God's Spirit came down in the form of a dove. Then God spoke from heaven and said, "You are my... Son. I love you, and you bring me great joy."

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, split the children into groups. Ask the children use their creativity to tell a portion of the story through a song. This activity typically works best if the children use the melody of a song they know and change the lyrics accordingly. Give them an assigned amount of time to work on their short song. The groups should then share their work with the others. Discuss as a group and have each child retell the story within their small groups.

*"You are my Son. I
love you, and you bring
me great joy"*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The term "spokesman" is used in place of "prophet," "disobedience" is used in place of "sin," and "God's Spirit" has been used in place of "Holy Spirit." Baptism is also described in the story.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Point out how God refers to Jesus. Ensure that the children understand that Jesus had not sinned. This is supported by 2 Cor. 5:21. Discuss why he would have chosen to be baptized.
4. What did you learn about people?
Children should grasp that though we are unworthy, God chooses to use us.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Encourage conversation about how our lives prove that we have turned to God. Ask children to consider that if Jesus was willing to do all that God requires, how much more should we?
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Paralyzed Man

Luke 5:17-26

Transition

God continued to show that Jesus was the Promised Savior as he gave him the power to do great miracles.

Luke 5:17

One day...Jesus was teaching a *huge crowd*. Some *religious leaders* had come from every village around to hear him, and they sat to listen. Through God's power, Jesus was healing the sick.

Luke 5:18-19

Some men came carrying *their friend* on a sleeping mat, because *he could not walk*. They tried to take him inside to Jesus, but they couldn't reach him because of the crowd. *Instead*, they went to the roof and took off some tiles. Then they lowered the *man who could not walk* on his mat down into the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

Luke 5:20

Jesus saw their belief and said to the sick man, "*Friend, your disobedience is forgiven.*"

Luke 5:21

...The *religious leaders in the crowd* heard this, and thought to themselves, "*How can Jesus say this? Only God can forgive disobedience!*"

Luke 5:22-24

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "*Why are you thinking this in your hearts? Do you think it is easier to say, 'Your disobedience is forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk?' ...I will prove to you that I have authority...to forgive disobedience.*"

Then Jesus turned to *the man who could not walk* and said, "*Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!*"

Luke 5:25-26

...Immediately...the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and went home praising God. *All the people there were in awe and also praised God. They said, "We have seen amazing things today!"*

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have the children reenact the scene. Depending upon the size of the group, you may need to divide the children into smaller groups. After parts have been assigned, ask the children to mime the actions while you narrate. The second time, have a child narrate and assigned children recite the lines of Jesus and the religious leaders. After reenacting the scene, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other.

*"Friend, your
disobedience is
forgiven."*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Disobedience" has been used in place of "sin," "religious leaders" has been used in place of "Pharisees," and the man who is healed is described as one who "could not walk" instead of "paralytic."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
In reference to Jesus' address of the paralytic as friend, discuss the personal aspects of a relationship with Him. Ensure that the children fully grasp that Jesus' physical healing of the paralytic shows he is able to provide spiritual healing through forgiveness of sin.
4. What did you learn about people?
Note the response of both the man and the crowd.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Discuss how and why the friends brought the paralytic to Jesus and how they can apply that principle in their friendships.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Man with Evil Spirits

Mark 5:1-20

Mark 5:1-2

Jesus and some of his close followers were crossing a lake in boat. When they arrived at the other side of the lake...a man filled with an evil spirit came...to meet Jesus.

Mark 5:3-5

This man lived where the dead were buried...and no one was strong enough to control him. When he was put into chains... he would snap them from his wrists!...He wandered all day and all night while he screamed and cut himself with sharp stones.

Mark 5:6-8

When...he saw Jesus, the man...ran to...him and bowed at his feet...Jesus...said, "Come out of the man, you evil spirit." The man screamed, "Why are you bothering me, Jesus, Son of...God?...I beg you, don't torture me!"

Mark 5:9-13

Then Jesus asked, "What is your name?" And he replied, "...Many, because there are many of us inside of this man." ...There was a huge herd of pigs feeding...nearby. "Send us into those pigs," the spirits begged...So Jesus gave them permission. The evil spirits came out of the man and entered the pigs, and all 2,000 pigs ran down the...hill and drowned in the lake.

Mark 5: 14-17

The men who cared for the pigs ran and told others what happened. People rushed out...and saw the man who had been filled with an evil spirit...sitting quietly and normal. The people were afraid...and asked Jesus to go away and leave them alone.

Mark 5:18-20

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been filled with an evil spirit begged to go with him. But Jesus said, "No, go home to your family and friends and tell them everything God has done for you..." So the man...visited all of the towns around and began to tell the great things Jesus had done for him, and everyone was amazed at what he told them.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have the children reenact the scene. Depending upon the size of the group, you may need to divide the children into smaller groups. After parts have been assigned, ask the children to mime the actions while you narrate. The second time, have a child narrate and assigned children recite the lines of Jesus and the possessed man. After reenacting the scene, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other.

*"Come out of the man,
you evil spirit!"*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The phrase "evil spirit" is used in place of "demon," "filled with an evil spirit" is used in place of "possessed," and the name "Legion" is simplified to "Many" for easier understanding.

1. What did you like?

2. What confused you?

Additional explanation may be needed concerning the evil spirits and their opposition to God. Some cultures view possession in a positive light, so ensure the audience understands that the spirit was harmful and that Jesus saved the man.

3. What did you learn about God?

Discuss the power and authority that Jesus displayed in this story.

4. What did you learn about people?

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

Emphasize the command to share what God has done with others and how we can use stories to obey this command.

6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

Death and Life

Matthew 27:1-2, 11, 22-26, 60

Luke 23:32-35, 44-46, 53, 24:1-7

Transition

Though many were amazed at what Jesus was doing, not everyone praised him. Some religious leaders did not like what he was teaching, and they had Jesus arrested. Their plan was actually part of God's plan, which he had told through his spokesman, Isaiah, hundreds of years before.

Matthew 27:1-2, 11

Those leaders took Jesus to the governor...who asked him whether he was the people's King. Jesus answered, "You have said it."

Matthew 27:22-26

The governor wanted to release Jesus, because he had done nothing wrong, but the large crowd there demanded the death penalty. They shouted, "We and our children will take responsibility for his death..." So the governor turned Jesus over to be beaten, whipped, and killed. After he was whipped with a lead-tipped whip,

Luke 23:32-35

...soldiers hammered nails through Jesus' hands and feet and nailed him to two planks of wood called a cross...The people mocked him. They said, "Let him save himself if he is really God's Promised Savior."

Luke 23:34, 44-46

As he was dying, he said, "Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they are doing." At noon that day, the entire area became as dark as night for three hours. Then Jesus died.

Luke 23:53, Matthew 27:60

A man took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in...cloth and laid it in a...tomb...in a rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance and left.

Luke 24:1-7

Three days later, some women went to the tomb...They saw that the stone had been rolled away...and that Jesus' body was not there. Suddenly, two angels appeared...and said, "...He isn't here! He has risen from the dead! Remember what he told you...that he must be killed, and that he would rise again on the third day."

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, tell the story again, but slowly and pausing after each sentence. Ask the children to create "sign language" for each line. Then ask a volunteer to narrate the story while the group demonstrates the motions. Depending upon the number of children, this activity may be done in small groups, with a volunteer narrating from each group. Have additional volunteers share the story with or without their sign language after the group discussion.

"He isn't here! He has risen from the dead!"

DISCOVERY

"Religious leaders" has been used in place of "priests and elders," "people's King" used in place of "King of the Jews," "death penalty" and "kill" in place of "crucify," and "Promised Savior" in place of "Messiah." The cross has been described for those who don't know what it is.

1. What did you like?

2. What confused you?

Ensure that the children understand Jesus was without sin. Emphasize that Jesus was dead, but is now alive.

3. What did you learn about God?

Point out his faithfulness to his plan and willingness to sacrifice his son and discuss why such a sacrifice was necessary. Highlight the fulfillment of prophecy and the magnitude of his desire for a personal relationship with us.

4. What did you learn about people?

If the audience consists of believers, discuss ways their life or walk with God would be different without his death and resurrection.

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

Spirit

Luke 24, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8-11, 2:1-4

Luke 24

After he rose, Jesus appeared to his followers and explained to them that everything had taken place to fulfill God's plan. Just as God said, he had suffered, died and risen from the dead on the third day to take the punishment for our disobedience and give us a right relationship with God. He said, "This is the Good News you must take to all people."

Mathew 28:19-20

So... "Go and make *followers* of all *people*, baptize them...and teach *them* to obey *my* commands. And be sure of this: I am with you always..."

Acts 1:8

Later, he told them, "...You will receive power when God's Spirit comes...and you will...*tell* people about me everywhere...to *all parts* of the earth.

Acts 1:9-11

After he said this, he was taken up into a cloud...to heaven. Two angels in white robes suddenly appeared and said, "...Why are you...staring at the sky? Someday Jesus...will return...the same way you saw him go!"

Transition

Jesus' followers remembered what he had said and waited for the promised Spirit.

Acts 2:1-4

Jesus' followers were meeting together at the time of an important religious festival. Suddenly...a sound...like...a mighty windstorm...filled the house where they were sitting, and something that looked like...fire came and rested on each of them. The followers were filled with God's Spirit, and the Spirit gave them the ability to speak in languages they had never spoken before!

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, begin to tell the story again, but stop at random points and have children fill in keywords. You may repeat this activity several times, leaving out additional words each time. Discuss as a group and share the story together. Start the story by sharing the first line, then go around the circle as each child recites one sentence until the story is complete. Conduct the same activity with partners, as they go back and forth sharing one line at a time.

*"You will receive power
when God's Spirit
comes"*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Good News" has been used in place of "Gospel," "followers" has been used in place of "disciples," and "God's Spirit" has been used in place of "Holy Spirit." We have chosen to identify the white-robed men as angels to avoid confusion.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Encourage conversation about God's love for all people, as seen in his command to share the Good News in all parts of the earth. Discuss the continued fulfillment of promises and the promise of his return, which we continue to await.
4. What did you learn about people?
Point out God's power and how that power continues to fill believers.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Emphasize the command to share with people throughout the earth and how we can use stories to obey this command.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Church

Acts 2:5-16, 22-24, 33-39, 41-47

Transition

Although Jesus' followers understood that God's Spirit had come just as Jesus promised, others were confused.

Acts 2:5-13

People from every nation were gathered in the city for the religious festival and heard the followers speaking their own languages. Some in the crowd were...amazed and asked each other, "What can this mean?" but others laughed at them.

Acts 2:14-16

Peter, one of Jesus' closest followers, stepped forward...and shouted to the crowd: "What you are seeing is something that was predicted hundreds of years ago..."

Acts 2:22-24, 33-36

"...God...did powerful miracles and wonders...through Jesus...but...you murdered him. But God raised Jesus from the dead...now he sits in heaven with God. And God, just like he...promised, has sent his Spirit to be with us, just as you see and hear now...The Jesus that you murdered is Master and Promised Savior!"

Acts 2:37-39

When the people heard this, their hearts were touched, and they said..."What should we do?" Peter replied, "You must turn from your sins and to God, and be baptized in Jesus' name for forgiveness from your disobedience...and you will receive...God's Spirit. This promise is for everyone."

Acts 2:41

That day, three thousand people believed the Good News and were baptized to show that they were turning away from their disobedience and turned to God.

Acts 2:42-47

And each day, God added more and more people to this group of followers, who were devoted to teaching, meeting together, remembering Jesus, and to praying to God.

Transition

To this day, followers of Jesus are still meeting together, praising God, and sharing the Good News about Jesus as we look forward to Jesus' return from heaven.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, tell the story again, but slowly and pausing after each sentence. Ask the children to create "sign language" for each line. Then ask a volunteer to narrate the story while the group demonstrates the motions.

Depending upon the number of children, this activity may be done in small groups, with a volunteer narrating from each group. Have additional volunteers share the story with or without their sign language after the group discussion

"And God, just like he promised, has sent his Spirit to be with us."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: The phrase "God's Spirit" has been used in place of "Holy Spirit" and "disciples" are referred to as the "closest followers." Be sure to be consistent in your use of terms from previous stories.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?

Discuss the faithfulness of God to his promises throughout the stories.

4. What did you learn about people?

Highlight the various reactions to the Good News in the story and compare them with the reactions to the Good News that the children have observed.

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

Emphasize the importance of baptism and meeting together with other followers.

Encourage discussion about the different ways the children see the activities of the early church observed in their churches today.

6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

APPENDIX 2

Five-Story Set

This story set is useful when you want to present an entire panorama of the Bible, but have a limited number of sessions with the children.



(five-story set)

In the beginning, there was **God**. He spoke, and **created the whole world and everything in it**. Then, he made a special creation- **He made man and woman**, and he patterned them after Himself. He had a perfect relationship with them, until one day, the **man and the woman disobeyed God, and that perfect relationship was broken. They were separated from God.**

Even when the world was full of people, the people were still separated from God. But God never forgot about his special creation. He still loved them and wanted to have a right relationship with them. **He sent spokesmen to the people to show them how to have a right relationship.** One of these spokesmen was Isaiah, who brought a message of hope about the Promised Savior. Through Isaiah, God said, “**The Savior that I will send will be beaten and whipped so you will be healed. I will put your disobedience onto him, and he will be punished and killed, but then have life again. Because of this, many people will have a right relationship with me**”.

From that time on, the people waited for this Promised Savior to come...and they waited...and they waited...

And God did keep his promise. **He sent the Promised Savior, Jesus**, and he was God’s very own Son. Jesus proved that he was the Promised Savior by performing many miracles and by healing people. He also set an example for the way we should live. Not everyone recognized who Jesus was, but many people did follow him. Jesus taught these followers. He even called those who believed in him “friends,” because their belief in him gave them a good relationship with him.

Some people did not like what Jesus was teaching, and they had Jesus arrested. Just as God said through the spokesman Isaiah, **Jesus was whipped, and beaten, and he died. But just as God had said, Jesus was given life again!**

Jesus then appeared to many of his followers and continued to teach them. He told them, “Go and tell people about me and all that has happened. **Teach them to obey what I taught you, and when they believe in me, baptize them.** This symbolic washing in water shows that **they have turned from their disobedience and turned to God through believing in me.** I will send God’s Spirit to you, and you will receive power to tell people about me everywhere.”

One day, Jesus was taken up in a cloud to heaven. While the followers were watching, two angels appeared and said, “**Jesus will come back the same way you saw him go!**”

Just as Jesus promised, he did send God’s Spirit to his followers. The Spirit gave them the power to tell people everywhere about Jesus, and that’s what followers of Jesus have been doing ever since! **When people believe in him, they are baptized to show that they have turned from their disobedience and turned to God through believing in Jesus.** Followers of Jesus then meet together to praise God, learn about Jesus, and meet one another’s needs.

And this is what I do. I tell people about Jesus.

Creation

Genesis 1:1-2:23, 3:1-24

Genesis 1:1-2:7

In the beginning, there was God. He spoke, and when he did, he created the whole world and everything in it---the light and water, the sun and moon and stars, and all the animals. But then, he made a special creation. He made man, and he patterned man after himself...He formed man from the dirt of the ground, and he breathed...into him, and he came to life.

Genesis 2:8-17

...God planted a beautiful garden...and...placed the man there. He showed the man two trees in the middle of the garden. One was a tree of life, and the other, a tree of understanding of good and evil...He told the man, "You can eat the fruit of every tree in the garden, except the tree of the understanding of good and evil, because if you eat it, you will die."

Genesis 2:18, 21-23

Then...God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him"...So he put the man...into a deep sleep...and formed a woman from him. When the man saw her, he was amazed and said "Wow, she looks just like me!"

Genesis 1:28, 31, 2:2-3

God cared for them...then he looked over all he had made, and he saw it was very good!...He did all these things in six days, then he set apart the seventh day for himself.

Genesis 3:1-7

One day, Satan entered the snake, the sneakiest of all the animals, and spoke to the woman. He said to her, "You won't die if you eat from the tree of the understanding of good and evil! God knows that...as soon as you eat it, you will be like God." She was convinced, so the woman and the man ate the fruit. As soon as they did, they felt something strange. They felt ashamed.

Genesis 3:8-24

Later, they heard God coming towards them, so they hid...He asked, "Have you eaten...the fruit I commanded you not to eat?" He then punished the snake and the man and woman for their disobedience. God said, "...What if they eat the fruit from the tree of life? Then they will live forever!" But God did not want them to live in disobedience forever, so He sent them out of the garden, and blocked the entrance.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, tell the story again, but slowly and pausing after each sentence. Ask the children to create sign language for each line. Then ask a volunteer to narrate the story while the group demonstrates the motions. Depending upon the number of children, this activity may be done in small groups, with a volunteer narrating from each group. Have additional volunteers share the story with or without their sign language after the group discussion.

"He made man, and he patterned man after himself."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Set apart" has been used in place of "holy," "cared for" has been used in place of "blessed," "understanding" has been used in place of "knowledge," "disobedience" has been used in place of "sin," and "patterned after himself" has been used in place of "made in the image of God."

1. What did you like?

2. What confused you?

Adam's response to Eve is a literal rendering of "flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone."

Explain his reaction if necessary

3. What did you learn about God?

Point out the fulfillment of God's warning about the consequences of disobedience.

4. What did you learn about people?

Note the difference between the formation of man and that of the rest of creation and consider the implications.

Discuss the relationship and communication between God and man at the beginning of the story and the changes following their disobedience.

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

Encourage conversation about obedience and observance of the Sabbath.

6. How will you remember this story?

Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

Promise and Baptism

Isaiah 53, Luke 3:3, 16, 21-22,

Matthew 3:7-9, 13-15

Transition

The man and woman's disobedience separated them from God, but he never forgot about them or stopped loving them, even when they had children, and their children had children. Finally the whole earth was full of people who were all separated from God. He still wanted to have a relationship with them. He sent many spokesmen to give his people messages from him, and to tell them of the Savior he would send for them. One of those spokesmen was Isaiah.

Isaiah 53

Through Isaiah, God said, "The Savior that I will send will suffer. He will be beaten...and whipped so you will be healed. I will put all of your disobedience onto the Promised Savior, and he will be punished and killed, but then have life again. Because of this, many people will have a right relationship with me."

Transition

The people waited for this Savior to come. After many years, he did come. God sent the spokesman John ahead of the Promised Savior to prepare the way.

Luke 3:3

John told people that they should be baptized, which is when someone is washed in water to show that they have turned away from disobedience and turned to God to be forgiven.

Matthew 3:7-9, Luke 3:16

...John also said..."Prove by the way that you live that you have turned away from your disobedience and turned to God"...He told about the Savior God was sending and about the great things he would do.

Luke 3:21, Matthew 3:13-15

One day when many people were being baptized, Jesus himself, the Savior from God, came to be baptized, even though he had never sinned. John didn't want to do it, because he didn't think he was good enough. But Jesus said that he must do all God asks, so John agreed...

Luke 3:21-22

...Afterwards, as Jesus was praying, the sky opened, and God's Spirit came down in the form of a dove. Then God spoke from heaven and said "You are my...son, I love You and you bring me great joy."

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, split the children into three groups. Assign each group a segment of this story; Isaiah's promise, John's message, or Jesus' baptism. After parts have been assigned, ask the children to tell this part of the story through a song. Give them an assigned amount of time to work on their short song. The groups should then share their work with the other groups in the order they appear in the story. Discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other.

"You are my son. I love you and you bring me great joy."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Spokesman" has been used in place of "prophet," "God's Spirit" in place of "Holy Spirit," "right relationship" in place of "righteousness," and "Promised Savior" is used to describe Jesus. "Baptism" and "repentance" is also explained with the use of additional phrases in the story.

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Point out how God refers to Jesus. Ensure that the children understand that Jesus had not sinned. This is supported by 2 Cor. 5:21. Discuss why he would have chosen to be baptized. It is important that the children grasp that God had a plan to redeem us and faithfully carried out his plan.
4. What did you learn about people?
Explain that God punishes disobedience and how that relates to us. Note that Jesus is the only way for us to have a right relationship with God.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Paralyzed Man

Luke 5:17-26

Transition

God continued to show that Jesus was the Promised Savior as he gave him the power to do great miracles.

Luke 5:17

One day...Jesus was teaching a *huge crowd*. Some *religious leaders* had come from every village around to hear him, and they sat to listen. Through God's power, Jesus was healing the sick.

Luke 5:18-19

Some men came carrying *their friend* on a sleeping mat, because he could not walk. They tried to take him inside to Jesus, but they couldn't reach him because of the crowd. *Instead*, they went to the roof and took off some tiles. Then they lowered the *man who could not walk* on his mat down into the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

Luke 5:20

Jesus saw *their belief* and said to the sick man, "*Friend, your disobedience is forgiven.*"

Luke 5:21

...The *religious leaders* in the crowd heard this, and thought to themselves, "*How can Jesus say this? Only God can forgive disobedience!*"

Luke 5:22-24

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "*Why are you thinking this in your hearts? Do you think it is easier to say, 'Your disobedience is forgiven', or to say, 'Stand up and walk'?...I will prove to you that I have authority...to forgive disobedience.*"

Then Jesus turned to *the man who could not walk* and said, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and go home!"

Luke 5:25-26

...Immediately...the man jumped up, picked up his mat, and went home praising God. *All the people there were in awe and also praised God. They said*, "We have seen amazing things today!"

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have the children reenact the scene. Depending upon the size of the group, you may need to divide the children into smaller groups. After parts have been assigned, ask the children to mime the actions while you narrate. The second time, have a child narrate and assigned children recite the lines of Jesus and the religious leaders. After reenacting the scene, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other.

*" Friend, your
disobedience is
forgiven."*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Disobedience" has been used in place of "sin," "religious leaders" has been used in place of "Pharisees," and the man who is healed is described as one who "could not walk" instead of "paralytic."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?

In reference to Jesus' address of the paralytic as friend, discuss the personal aspects of a relationship with him. Ensure that the children fully grasp that Jesus' physical healing of the paralytic shows he is able to provide spiritual healing through forgiveness of sin.

Point out the connection between this story and the promise from Isaiah's message that the Savior will take our disobedience onto himself.

4. What did you learn about people?
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

Discuss how and why the friends brought the paralytic to Jesus and how they can apply that principle in their friendships.

6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

Death and Life

**Matthew 27:1-2, 11, 22-26, 60, 28:19-20,
Luke 23:32-35, 44-46, 53, 24:1-7, 44-47**

Transition

Not everyone praised Jesus. Some religious leaders did not like what he was teaching, and they had Jesus arrested. Their plan was actually part of God's plan, which he had told through his spokesman, Isaiah, hundreds of years before.

Matthew 27:1-2, 11, 22-26

Those leaders took Jesus to the governor... who asked him whether he was the people's King. Jesus answered, "You have said it"...The governor wanted to release Jesus, because he had done nothing wrong, but the large crowd there demanded the death penalty...The governor turned Jesus over to be beaten, whipped, and killed.

Luke 23:32-35

Jesus was nailed to two planks of wood called a cross. The people mocked him. They said, "Let him save himself if he is really God's Promised Savior."

Luke 23:34,44-46

As he was dying, he said, "Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they are doing." At noon that day, the entire area became as dark as night for three hours. Then Jesus died.

Luke 23:53, Matthew 27:60

A man took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in...cloth and laid it in a...tomb...in a rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance and left.

Luke 24:1-7

Three days later, some women went to the tomb...They saw that the stone had been rolled away...and that Jesus' body was not there. Suddenly, two angels appeared...and said, "...He isn't here! He has risen, just like he told you he would!"

Luke 24:44-47

Jesus then appeared to many of his followers and reminded them of the promise that had been told through his spokesman Isaiah...He said, "...It was written long ago that the Promised Savior would be beaten, die, and rise from the dead...You have seen these things.

Matthew 28:19-20

So go and tell this Good News to everyone in the world, baptize them, and teach them what I have taught you. And know I am with you always."

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, have each child individually reenact a portion of the story, like charades. The rest of the children then guess what the child is portraying. After reenacting the scenes, discuss as a group and have the children split into pairs to share the story with each other and have one or more children share the story with the group.

"He has risen, just like he told you he would."

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "Religious leaders" has been used in place of "priests and elders," "people's King" used in place of "King of the Jews," "death penalty" and "kill" in place of "crucify," and "Promised Savior" in place of "Messiah." If necessary, "tomb" may be described as a "hole or cave where dead people are buried."

1. What did you like?

2. What confused you?

Ensure that the children understand that Jesus was without sin. Emphasize that Jesus was dead, but is now alive.

3. What did you learn about God?

Point out God's faithfulness to his plan and willingness to sacrifice his Son, and discuss why such a sacrifice was necessary. Highlight the fulfillment of prophecy and the magnitude of his desire for a personal relationship with us.

4. What did you learn about people?

If the audience consists of believers, discuss ways their life or walk with God would be different without his death and resurrection.

5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?

Discuss the command to share this Good News.

6. How will you remember this story?

Tell it!

7. Who will you tell this story to?

Spirit

Acts 1:8-11, 2:1-33, 41-47

Acts 1:8-11

While Jesus was still with his followers, he said, "...You will receive power when God's Spirit comes...and you will... tell people about me everywhere...to all parts of the earth. After he said this, he was taken up into a cloud...to heaven. Two angels in white robes suddenly appeared and said, "...Why are you...staring at the sky? Someday Jesus...will return...the same way you saw him go!"

Transition

So his followers waited for God's promised Spirit. Several days later,

Acts 2:1-4

Jesus' followers were meeting together at the time of an important religious festival. Suddenly...a sound...like...a mighty windstorm...filled the house where they were sitting, and something that looked like...fire came and rested on each of them. The followers were filled with God's Spirit, and the Spirit gave them the ability to speak in languages they had never spoken before!

Acts 2:5-13

People from all over the world had come to the city for the religious festival and heard the followers speaking their own languages. Some in the crowd were amazed and asked each other, "What can this mean?"...but others...laughed at the followers.

Acts 2:14-33

One of Jesus' followers came forward to explain what was happening. He told them the Good News about Jesus and that everything that was happening was fulfilling Jesus' promise to send God's Spirit.

Acts 2:41

That day, three thousand people believed the Good News and were baptized to show that they were turning away from their disobedience and turning to God.

Acts 2:42-47

And each day, God added more and more people to this group of followers, who were devoted to teaching, meeting together, remembering Jesus, and to praying to God.

Acts 2:42-47

To this day, followers of Jesus are still meeting together, praising God, and sharing the Good News about Jesus as we look forward to Jesus' return from heaven.

TEACHING

After telling the story twice, begin to tell the story again, but stop at random points and have children fill in keywords. You may repeat this activity several times, leaving out additional words each time. Discuss as a group and share the story together. Start the story by sharing the first line, then go around the circle as each child recites one sentence until the story is complete. Conduct the same activity with partners, as they go back and forth sharing one line at a time.

*"You will receive power
when God's Spirit
comes."*

DISCOVERY

Special Terms: "God's Spirit" has been used in place of "Holy Spirit," and "important religious festival" refers to Pentecost. "Good news" is also used in place of "the Gospel."

1. What did you like?
2. What confused you?
3. What did you learn about God?
Discuss the fulfillment of God's promises throughout the stories.
4. What did you learn about people?
Compare the group of early believers to the church today. Emphasize God's power and how that power fills his followers. Discuss the different responses of the crowd to the miracle.
5. How can you use what you learned in your life this week?
Emphasize the command to share with people throughout the earth and how we can use stories to obey this command.
6. How will you remember this story?
Tell it!
7. Who will you tell this story to?

APPENDIX 3

The following activities vary your storying sessions with the children and keep the action fresh and exciting. They also help the children learn the stories in different ways. You'll find as children journey through this story set with you, they become more and more capable of learning even complicated stories quickly and well. Varying activities and keeping it fun helps the children write the stories on their heart so that they can pull them out of their toolbox whenever a situation comes up where they can use them!

Activity Options

Charades- Have participants choose one line from the story and use actions to convey that line to the rest of the group. The child that guesses correctly goes next.

Skit- Assign parts to group and have them act out the story as you or a participant narrates. This can be done as a group or in smaller teams. If done in teams, you may choose to have each team act out the whole story, or assign sections and have them perform the skits in chronological order one after the other.

Song- This activity seems to work best in small groups of older and more advanced students. If you believe your group would enjoy this activity, have them write and perform a song based on a story or a portion of a story. To make this task easier, have each group choose a song melody as their foundation and change the lyrics as needed, as opposed to starting from scratch.

Sign Language- This is a great way to incorporate kinesthetic learning into storying. Work with the participants to develop "sign language" for keywords in the story. This will help them to remember the order and progression of the story. This activity may also be done as a group or in smaller teams. If done in teams, have a participant from each team narrate as the group demonstrates their motions. The more creative, the more likely they are to remember it! Sign language is a good activity if younger and more inexperienced storytellers are part of the group.

Perspective shift - This creative and critical thinking activity works best later in the story set. Assign groups of children different characters in the story. They then adjust the story they have learned to the perspective of that character. For example, they could tell the Birth story from Mary and Joseph's perspectives or the Baptism story from the perspective of John or Jesus.

Memory – The storyteller starts this activity by saying the first line of the story. The story then moves around the circle as each participant tells a line. An alternate method is to go back and forth between partners as they tell the story to each other.

Popcorn- The storyteller also starts this activity. As children remember, they raise their hand. When ready, the storyteller yells “pop” and the name of someone with their hand raised. That person will then jump in until more hands are raised and they shout “pop” to pass the story to another child. You will likely need to demonstrate how this works.

Interview- Again, children are assigned different characters; A child designated as “interviewer” asks the characters questions about what happened in the story and character answers according to role. For example, the interviewer could ask the herdsman in the “Man with Evil Spirits” story about what they witnessed and he or she would relate that portion of the story.

Action words- Before telling the story, the storyteller gives instructions associated with particular words. Children listen for those words in the story, and must do appropriate action when heard. For example, the storyteller would tell the participants to lean back each time they hear the word “baptize”. There should be multiple words associated with actions in the story. This activity also works well with a younger audience.

Grouping Options

Partners

Name Game- Have children count the number of letters in their name and find someone with the same number of letters to be their partner. If necessary, find the child with closest number of letters.

Opposites- Instruct children to pair up with someone who is opposite from them in some way. Examples include gender, height, hair color, eye color, etc.

Puzzles- Cut out pictures from a magazine so there are half as many pictures as there are children in the group. Cut each picture in half like a puzzle. Mix the pieces together and each child takes one half of a picture. The two children with adjoining pictures become partners.

Phone Number- Tell children to find a partner with the same last number in their phone number.

Vowels- Have children find a partner with the same first vowel in their name.

Small Groups

Deck of Cards- Bring a deck of cards and have each child draw one. Those with black cards form one group, while those with red cards form another. If more than two groups are needed, split based upon the numbers.

Birthday Line- Have the children arrange themselves in a line according to the chronological order of the months and dates of their birthdays. The leader then separates the children into the necessary number of groups.

Height Line- As in the birthday line, the children arrange themselves in a line from tallest to shortest. The leader then separates into participants into groups.

Arm Cross- Have everyone cross their arms over their chest, then look down to see which arm is on top. Those that cross left over right are one group, and those that cross right over left are another.

Thumb Size- Ask children to find three or four others who have about the same thumb size.

Candy Shop- Bring colored candies, such as M&Ms or Jolly Ranchers. Each child may take one, but be sure to instruct them not to eat it yet. They then find peers with the same color candy and form a group. They may also form rainbow groups with each of the colors.

Simon Says- Play “Simon Says” as you normally would. The difference is that children that get “out” instead form a circle and become a group. Stop the game when groups are even.

Four Seasons- Instruct children to find others born in the same season. The seasons then become the groups. Make adjustments if necessary.

For more information about related story sets, please go to www.st4t.org.

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